

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A promotional device for effecting operation of a specific gaming application on a gaming machine that is in communication with the promotional device, the promotional
5 device having associated therewith indicia of credit and a specific player to which operation of the specific gaming application and application of the credit is limited.

2. The promotional device of claim 1 further comprising visual elements on the promotional device representing the specific gaming application.

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3. The promotional device of claim 1 wherein the promotional device is a printed ticket and wherein the indicia of credit is associated with a bar code on the printed ticket.

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4. The promotional device of claim 3 wherein the bar code also identifies the specific gaming application.

5. The promotional device of claim 1 wherein the promotional device is a card having magnetic information stored therein which includes the credit.

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6. The promotional device of claim 5 wherein the magnetic information also identifies the specific gaming application.

7. The promotional device of claim 1 wherein the promotional device is a card having a memory embedded therein which stores information corresponding to the credit.

8. The promotional device of claim 7 wherein the information identifies the specific gaming application.

5 9. The promotional device of claim 1 wherein the gaming machine is part of a gaming network that includes a remote storage device, at least part of the credit being stored in the remote storage device.

10 10. The promotional device of claim 9 wherein the promotional device identifies the specific player and the part of the credit stored in the remote storage device that is associated with the specific player.

11. The promotional device of claim 1 wherein information including the specific gaming application, specific player, and indicia of credit associated with the promotional
15 device is stored in at least one database, and wherein the at least one database is accessible with player identification information stored on the promotional device.

12. The promotional device of claim 1 wherein the promotional device is configured to be inserted into the gaming machine to facilitate communication with the gaming machine.
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13. The promotional device of claim 1 wherein the promotional device further comprises a wireless transmitter for communicating with the gaming machine.

14. The promotional device of claim 1 further configured to identify a gaming venue in which the promotional device may be employed.

15. A gaming machine, comprising:

5 circuitry for receiving data from a promotional device,

wherein the data includes player identification information for a specific player associated with the promotional device,

wherein the data further includes or is used to access an indicia of credit associated with the promotional device and information about a specific gaming application
10 on the gaming machine to which the promotional device and the credit is limited; and

a processor configured to:

determine whether the specific gaming application is associated with the gaming machine,

authenticate the specific player associated with the promotional device.

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16. The gaming machine of claim 15, wherein the processor is further configured to enable operation of the gaming application in accordance with the credit if the specific gaming application is associated with the gaming machine and if the identity of the specific player is authenticated.

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17. The gaming machine of claim 15, wherein the processor is configured to authenticate the specific player by determining whether the player identification information associated with the promotional device is consistent with a secondary form of player identification presented to the gaming machine.

18. The gaming machine of claim 17, wherein the secondary form of player identification presented to the gaming machine is a player tracking card, biometric information, a PIN number, a driver's license, a smart card, a credit card, a wireless device, or a combination thereof.

19. The gaming machine of claim 17, wherein the indicia of credit associated with the promotional device and information about the specific gaming application on the gaming machine to which the promotional device and the credit is limited is stored in a first database, and wherein information associated with the secondary form of player identification is stored in a second database.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein the first database and the second database are the same.

21. The method of claim 19, wherein the player identification information stored in the first database is accessible using information from the promotional device, and wherein the information associated with the secondary form of player identification stored in the second database is accessible using information from the secondary form of player identification.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein the first database and second database are accessible using a player tracking account number.

23. The gaming machine of claim 15 wherein the gaming machine is part of a gaming network which includes a remote storage device, at least part of the credit being stored in the remote storage device.

5 24. The gaming machine of claim 15 wherein the circuitry comprises one of a magnetic card reader, a bar code reader, and a wireless receiver.

25. The gaming machine of claim 15, wherein the player identification information is a player tracking account number.

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26. A method for operating a gaming machine, comprising:
communicating with a promotional device having associated credit,
wherein the promotional device is associated with a specific player, and
wherein the promotional device is configured to apply the credit to a specific

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gaming application; and
prior to enabling operation of the specific gaming application on the gaming machine
and applying the credit toward the specific gaming application:

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authenticating the specific player associated with the promotional device; and
determining whether the specific gaming application is associated with the
gaming machine.

27. The method of claim 26, further comprising enabling operation of the specific gaming application on the gaming machine and applying the credit toward the specific

gaming application if the specific player is authenticated and if the specific gaming application is associated with the gaming machine.

28. The method of claim 26, further comprising disabling operation of the specific gaming application on the gaming machine and refusing to apply the credit toward the specific gaming application if the specific player is not authenticated.

29. The method of claim 26, further comprising disabling operation of the specific gaming application on the gaming machine and refusing to apply the credit toward the specific gaming application if the specific gaming application is not associated with the gaming machine.

30. The method of claim 26, wherein authenticating the specific player includes determining that player identification information associated with the promotional device matches a secondary form of player identification presented to the gaming machine.

31. The method of claim 30, wherein the secondary form of player identification is a player tracking card, biometric information, a PIN number, a driver's license, a smart card, a credit card, a wireless device, or a combination thereof.

32. The method of claim 30, wherein the player identification information is stored in a first database, and wherein information associated with the secondary form of player identification is stored in a second database.

33. The method of claim 32, wherein the first database and the second database are the same.

34. The method of claim 32, wherein the player identification information stored in the first database is accessible using information from the promotional device, and wherein the information associated with the secondary form of player identification stored in the second database is accessible using information from the secondary form of player identification.

35. The method of claim 26 wherein the gaming machine is part of a gaming network having at least one gaming server associated therewith, and wherein enabling operation of the specific gaming application comprises employing objects associated with the specific gaming application distributed among the gaming machine and the at least one gaming server.

36. The method of claim 35 wherein the network is one of a local area network and a wide area network.

37. The method of claim 26 wherein communicating with the promotional device comprises receiving the promotional device in a receptacle associated with the gaming machine.

38. The method of claim 26 wherein communicating with the promotional device comprises receiving a wireless transmission from the promotional device.

39. The method of claim 26 further comprising identifying at least one gaming venue in which the promotional device may be employed.

40. The method of claim 39 wherein the at least one gaming venue comprises multiple
5 related gaming venues.

41. A promotional device for effecting operation of a specific gaming application on a gaming site via the Internet, the promotional device having associated therewith indicia of credit and a specific player to which operation of the specific gaming application and
10 application of the credit is limited.